

THE STATE AND THE POLITICS OF CULTURE:  
A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE NATIONAL  
ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

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ABSTRACT  
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The State and the Politics of Culture: A Critical Analysis of the  
National Endowment for the Arts

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This research effort, which is descriptive and theoretical, seeks to critically examine the National Endowment for the Arts. In an attempt to discern to what extent the Endowment has or has not realized its stated objectives, data were collected and analyzed concerning the organization's structure; its values; its program; grant allocation procedures; and staffing procedures. In addition, specific attention is focused on certain institutions and organizations, both cultural and educational, that have received substantial and consistent financial as well as technical support from the Endowment.

The theoretical assumptions of this study rest on the premise that the federal government, by way of the National Endowment for the Arts, plays a vital role in maintaining cultural hegemony of a particular race and class. The study advances two general hypotheses: 1) The interwoven bureaucracy of the National Endowment for the Arts is structured in a way which prevents maximum participation in its programs by the broader arts community; and 2) Black, and smaller cultural/educational institutions and organizations receive minimum support from the

Endowment.

Chapter I is the introduction. Chapter II traces the evolutionary process of the Endowment's creation. It also looks at the principal laws that were instrumental in the establishment of the Endowment. In addition, a focus is placed on its bureaucratic structure. Chapter III looks at the current activities to increase support to the Endowment; proposed legislation to increase support. The role of the government (in particular President Carter's Administration) is closely examined. Chapter IV examines the Endowment in terms of its ability to execute its programs; categorizing applications; the review process; making the decisions; and staffing procedures. Chapter V focuses on the "politics of the Endowment" and its relationship to establishing and maintaining cultural values in American Society.

I do not believe that it is a necessary effort of a democratic social condition and of democratic institutions to diminish the number of those who cultivate the fine arts, but these causes exert a powerful influence on the manner in which these arts are cultivated. Many of those who have already contracted a taste for the fine arts are impoverished...the number of consumers increases, but opulent and fastidious consumers become scarce....The production of artists are more numerous, but the merit of each production is diminished....In aristocracies, a few great pictures are produced; in democratic countries, a vast number of insignificant one.

- Alexis de Tocqueville

in Democracy in America

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Grace Overmyer's book, Government and the Arts, focused on "the history, plan or organization, financing and...operation of systems used in various countries for the official encouragement and support of the fine arts."<sup>1</sup> Although the book was written years before the establishment of the National Endowment for the Arts, it raised significant concerns then that indeed would pertain to the Endowment.

In her study, covering some 50 foreign countries, Overmyer pointed out that generally, individuals have raised objections to state patronage of the arts. In a chapter entitled "Government Interference with Art?", she indicated that there are basically three reasons for such objections:

- 1) That government aid to art, particularly if to include establishment of personal subsidies, serves to foster mediocrity by providing a living for those whose limited talents would cause them, unassisted, properly to abandon the struggle;
- 2) That art administration, authorized by government, have it in their power to set up standards with their personal tastes and methods, or with those of some particular school, and thus to discourage production by artists of other tastes and techniques, or to compel their conformance; and

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<sup>1</sup>Grace Overmyer, Government and the Arts (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1939), p. 15. Overmyer emphasized the role of the government in the protection and development of the arts. She pointed out that the book was not written to justify or to condemn state aid to art as an institution. She wrote that: "its chief objective has been the assembling of such facts as must form the basis of a just or useful judgement" (p. 10).

- 3) That state assistance may involve official censorship and may promote propaganda.<sup>2</sup>

Overmyer added that the most obvious avenue to censorship in the arts is provided by the state. She discussed the situation involving the Federal Theatre where federal government interference was quite evident,<sup>3</sup> "...that was in the case of the living newspaper Ethiopia, which Washington ordered withdrawn before its opening, on the ground that its subject matter was adversely critical of the foreign power."<sup>4</sup> Overmyer also indicated that there were "a few cases of local interferences with Federal Theatre Productions."<sup>5</sup> It is also suggested that part of the Federal Theatre problems came about as a result of another one of its plays entitled, "Triple a Plowed Under." She points out that production was, "...openly critical, not only of the government's farm policies but also of certain of its...labor policies; it even went so far as to suggest formation of a new anti-administration political party."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 208.

<sup>3</sup>The Federal Theatre was part of President Roosevelt's "New Deal" Program, under the Works Progress Administration (WPA), to put artists to work. The Federal Writers Project and the Federal Art Project were under this same program. However, the program was destroyed by the Martin Dies Committee.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 212.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid. Also, see Joseph Bensman and Bernard Rosenberg, Mass, Class and Bureaucracy (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963). They concluded by pointing out that in mass culture, "art is subsidiary: it is an instrumentality." Often it is used as "an inspirational device for stressing patriotism, reinforcing national unity, and heightening morale" (p. 343). Writing on the subject, "The Role of the Artist in the

Underlining themes from Overmyer's book allude to what C. Wright Mills characterized as "The Cultural Apparatus." In Power, Politics and People, Mills maintained that the Cultural Apparatus is:

Composed of all the organizations and milieux in which artistic, intellectual and scientific work goes on, and of the means by which such work is made available to circles, publics, and masses....It contains an elaborate set of institutions: of schools, laboratories, museums, little magazines, radio networks.<sup>7</sup>

Mills points out that, "it is in terms of some such conceptions as this apparatus that 'the politics of culture' may be understood."<sup>8</sup> Mills goes further than those who merely object to the role of the state in the administration of the arts. He focuses on the entire apparatus as it is constituted. He maintained that:

The prestige of culture is among the major means by which powers of decision are made to seem part of an unchallengeable authority. That is why the cultural apparatus, no matter how internally free, tends in every nation to become

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Production of Mass Culture," they conclude that: "The mass artist may be a talented script writer, a gifted copywriter, or musician. He works for a salary, fee, or commission. He is given an assignment, the substance, outline, and limits of which are prescribed for him. He must obey particular caveats, taboos, and rules of style along lines laid down for him by nonartistic administrators within his organization, or an agency that hires his organization. His work is subject to arbitrary review, revision and evisceration whenever it fails to meet standards set for him by higher officials. If his role is important, he must live a respectable, or at least a noncontroversial public life, in accordance with the tenets of respectability defined by mass culture. He should be cooperative and tractable, and free of stubborn streaks and recalcitrance, especially about the nature of his art...." (p. 367).

<sup>7</sup>C. Wright Mills, Power, Politics and People: The Collected Essays of C. Wright Mills, edited by Irving Louis Horowitz (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 406.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 407.

a close adjunct of national authority and leading agency of nationalist propaganda.<sup>9</sup>

The movement to establish a national office for the arts in the United States was evolving when Overmyer and Mills were writing about the states and the arts. Their assertions, and the arts structures that would evolve, began to crystalize at certain points. Mills, in his depiction of the relationship between the establishment and support of the arts, and how it impacts on the society writes that, "The money and the public for culture are...related. The source and amount of the money, and the extent and nature of the public go far to determine the character of a cultural apparatus."<sup>10</sup> Mills, in giving a historical development of this dimension, wrote that there are basically three stages into which a "natural history of modern cultures" tends to fall:

- 1) In Europe, including Russia, the modern cultural apparatus begins as a patronage system: Patrons personally support culture and also form the public for which it is produced. The Cultural Apparatus is established upon a pre-capitalist basis, in close relation to princely house, to church, to monarch, and later to bourgeois patrician. By his work, the cultural workman brings prestige to such higher circles and to the institutions over which they rule. Part of the coterie of these authorities, his status is often ambiguous and insecure. He is usually dependent upon the whims of The Great Ones, whom he devises, amuses, and instructs.
- 2) Then emerges the bourgeois public: The cultural workman becomes an entrepreneur. He earns money by the sale of cultural commodities to anonymous publics. For a brief liberal period in Western history, he stands on common ground with the bourgeois entrepreneur. Both fight against the remnants of feudal control--the businessmen to break the bonds of the chartered enterprise, the writer to free himself

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 410.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 411.

from the insecurities of patronage. Both fight for a new kind of freedom for wool and shoes, and for an anonymous public for novels and portraits.

- 3) In the third stage, which we now enter, several tendencies evident in the second, are carried to their logical outcome: The cultural apparatus is established politically or commercially; the cultural workman becomes a man who is qualified, politically or commercially. Both money and public are "provided," and in due course, so are cultural products themselves. Culture work is not only guided; culture is produced and distributed--and even consumed--to order. Commercial agencies or political authorities support cultural, but unlike older patrons, they do not form its sole public. The public for culture is enormously enlarged and intensively cultivated into the condition of a receptive mass.<sup>11</sup>

He thus concludes that, "Today...all three stages exist side by side, in one nation or another, in one division of culture or another.

Accordingly, the politics of culture and the culture of politics around the world are quite various."<sup>12</sup>

Various divisions are relationships in culture and politics within the United States, in many respects, can be viewed through the role of The National Endowment for the Arts. In order to help clarify the Endowment's complex bureaucracy, attention is focused on its size, structure, racial and ethnic composition, and philosophy. The political and economic status of the Endowment's primary grant recipient is also analyzed. An assessment is made of the roles of individual panelist and consultants that are instrumental in the decision-making process of the Endowment. Attempts are made to carefully examine categories of classification as well as description of categories for

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., pp. 411-412.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 413.

funding. A key aspect of the Endowment is its personnel. Who are they? How are they chosen? These are essential questions that are addressed. An emphasis is also placed on ethnic and cultural pluralism, as advocated by the Endowment; its distinction made between the races, policies for affirmative action, and how proposals are awarded and rejected. Issues involving the circumstances under which the Endowment was established are examined, as well as the laws, rules and regulations that govern its operation. This research effort will examine the Endowment's support to Black cultural institutions and organizations. The information presented in this paper reflects the evolution of the Endowment through 1980.

## CHAPTER II

### THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

The National Endowment for the Arts is an agency of the federal government which carries out programs of grants-in-aid to arts agencies of the U. S. jurisdiction, to nonprofit, tax exempt organizations and individuals of exceptional talent. The move to establish an official arts agency in the United States can be said to have begun almost two centuries ago. Without any direct mention, the notions of such an agency has prevailed since that time. In 1782, John Adams, second President of the United States stated that:

(I) must study politics and war, that my sons may have liberty to study mathematics and philosophy, geography, natural history and naval architecture, navigation, commerce, and agriculture, in order to give their children a right to study painting, poetry, music, architecture.<sup>1</sup>

George Washington, in an acknowledgement in 1788, declared that: "arts and science are essential to the prosperity of the state and to the ornament and happiness of human life."<sup>2</sup> In 1826, President of the American Academy of Arts, echoing the same sentiments of the two U. S. Presidents, presented a proposal to President John Quincy Adams which suggested that the National Government engage in permanent support of

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<sup>1</sup>National Endowment for the Arts, Creative America: Arts and the Pursuit of Happiness (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1976), p. 8.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 10.

the fine arts.<sup>3</sup> In 1859, President James Buchanan formed a National Arts Commission. In 1896, the Public Art League of the United States was organized for the specific purpose of influencing art legislation in Congress. A few years later, in 1910, President William Taft signed a bill creating the Fine Arts Commission, which was to advise the President and Congress on matters relating primarily to the architectural appearance of Washington, D. C.<sup>4</sup>

In 1934, President Franklin D. Roosevelt established The Section of Painting and Sculpture in the Treasury Department as the first official unit of government devoted to decorating post offices and courthouses in the United States. In 1935, President Roosevelt's New Deal Program, Works Progress Administration (WPA) was expanded to include artists. A number of the arts programs were developed. It has been estimated that as a result of the New Deal Program, the nation gained well over

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>4</sup>In 1964, The Commission of Fine Arts presented to the President its 18th Report, covering activities during the period July 1, 1958 to June 1963. The report clarified the following: "As an advisory agency, the Commission cannot force agencies to consult it or take its advice, but it is unable to fulfill its duties if not consulted. Some of the members of the Congress had come to realize the difficulties experienced by the Commission and resolutions (S. J. Res. 147 and H. J. Res. 544 of the 86th Congress) were introduced, by Senator J. William Fulbright of Arkansas and Congressman Frank Thompson of New Jersey, which would give congressional sanction to the jurisdiction of the Commission over the National Capital Region, and which would combine the various Executive Orders of the Commission into a single law. While not making compliance with the Commission's advice mandatory, the proposed legislation... required reports to the President and Congress justifying noncompliance with the advice."



2,500 murals, 17,000 sculptures, and 108,000 canvasses.<sup>5</sup> During the 75th Congress (1937-38), a fine arts bill was presented to the Congress by Washington Congressman John M. Coffee and Florida Senator Claude Pepper. The Coffee-Pepper bill proposed that a formal recognition of the arts be established by the creation of a new bureau. Also in 1937, New York Congressman William I. Sirovich introduced "The Federal Arts Act" with provisions for a fine arts bureau in the Department of the Interior. It was these and many other endeavors that perhaps inspired President Dwight D. Eisenhower to state in his "State of the Union Address" in 1958 that: "The Federal Government should give official recognition of the importance of the arts and other cultural activities." It was then up to President John F. Kennedy, who succeeded Eisenhower, to push the drive forward to establish an official arts agency.<sup>6</sup>

In 1962, President Kennedy appointed August Heckscher to the position of Special Consultant on the Arts. In doing so, he directed him to survey and evaluate the impact of existing government programs and policies affecting the arts and make recommendations for future action. On May 28, 1963, Heckscher submitted a report, "The Arts and the National Government," to President Kennedy which made three

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<sup>5</sup>Creative America, p. 23.

<sup>6</sup>See Arts in America (May-June 1979), "Issues and Comment." Adding more clarity to the growth and development of the arts agency at this point, it was written that: "The National Arts Policy in the second half of the 20th century was launched in 1960 by Nelson Rockefeller when he was Governor of New York, and run, in its first few years, pretty much out of his pocket as a pale shadow of the family's Rockefeller Foundation," p. 10.

significant recommendations:

- 1) That the post of Special Consultant on the Arts be made permanent, with its rank raised to that of Special Advisor;
- 2) That the President establish an Advisory Council on the Arts; and
- 3) That legislation already pending in Congress to create a National Foundation on the Arts be endorsed.

On the recommendations of the report, the President issued an Executive Order establishing the Advisory Council on the Arts. When President Lyndon Johnson assumed office (following the assassination of President Kennedy), he appointed Roger L. Stevens<sup>7</sup> to the position of Special Assistant to the President on the Arts and gave him the assignment of developing congressional support for a permanent arts agency within the Federal Government.

In 1964, Congress established The National Council on the Arts to make recommendations on matters relating to the cultural development of the nation.<sup>8</sup> It was one year later that Congress took the necessary action and created The National Endowment for the Arts. In establishing the Endowment, "Congress found and declared that the encouragement and

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<sup>7</sup>Roger L. Stevens also served as Chairman of the Endowment during its initial stages of development. He later became the Director of the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D. C.

<sup>8</sup>In 1964, both Houses of the Congress passed legislation approving an Advisory Council on the Arts. President Johnson signed Public Law 88-579 on September 3, 1963, establishing the National Council on the Arts, an advisory body of 24 citizens prominent in the arts who were given the responsibility for recommending ways to maintain and increase the cultural resources of the nation.

support of national progress...in the arts, while primarily a matter of private and local initiative, is also a matter of concern of the Federal Government."<sup>9</sup> On September 29, 1965, President Lyndon Johnson signed The Arts and Humanities Act providing for the creation of The National Endowment for the Arts<sup>10</sup> (see Figure 1). On September 3, 1969, President Richard Nixon nominated Nancy Hanks<sup>11</sup> Chairman of the Endowment. After confirmation, she was sworn into office on October 6, 1969. Figures 2 and 3 list the Endowment's staff (1979-80) and members of the Federal Council (1978-79), respectively.

Over the years, the Endowment's budget (total funds for programs) has increased from \$2,500,000 in 1965 to \$154,400,000 in 1980 (see

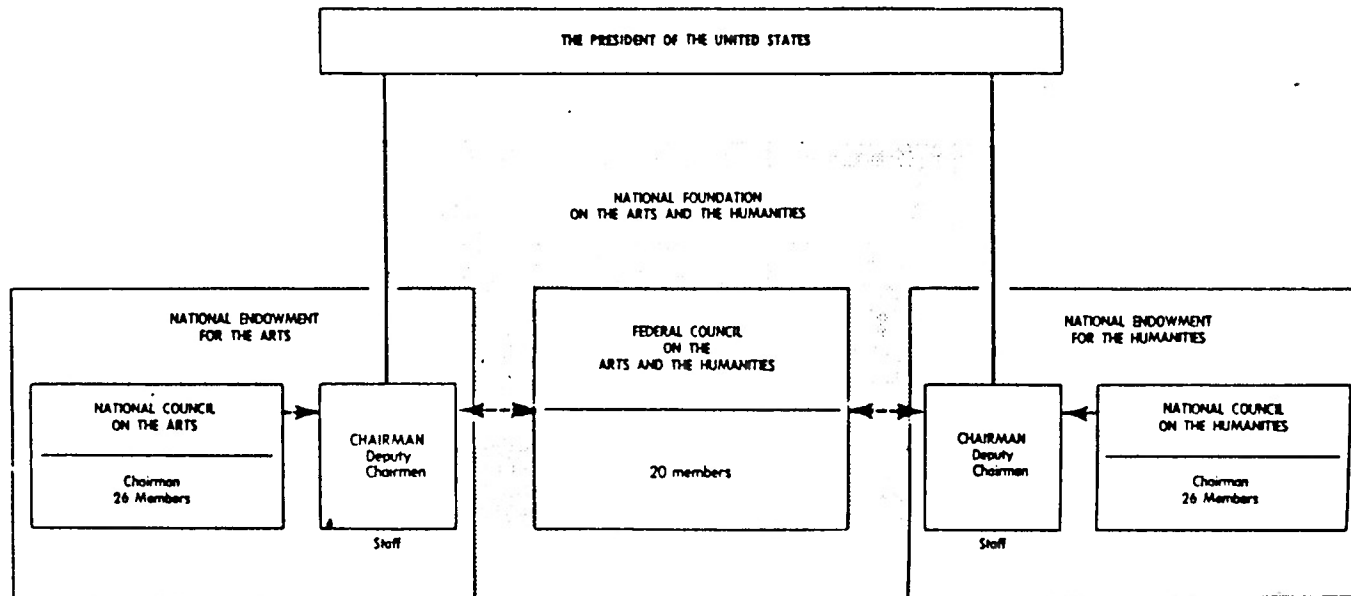
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<sup>9</sup>The National Endowment for the Arts: National Council on the Arts, "Chairman's Statement," Annual Report, 1975.

<sup>10</sup>The "Declaration of Purpose for the National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities Act of 1965, Section 2, spells out that: "The Congress hereby finds and declares...(5) That while no government can call a great artist or scholar into existence, it is necessary and appropriate for the Federal Government to help create and sustain not only a climate encouraging freedom of thought, imagination, and inquiry but also to material conditions facilitating the release of this creative talent; (6) That the world leadership which has come to the United States cannot rest solely upon superior power, wealth, and technology, but must be solidly founded upon world-wide respect and admiration for the nation's high qualities as a leader in the realm of ideas and of the spirit; and (7) That, in order to implement these findings, it is desirable to establish a National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities.

<sup>11</sup>Nancy Hanks is a graduate of Duke University in Political Science. Prior to her appointment as Chairman, she spent more than a dozen years working in philanthropy. Miss Hanks also worked as Nelson Rockefeller's personal secretary during this period. For more details about philanthropy in the arts, see Faye Levine's, The Cultural Barons: An Analysis of Power and Money in the Arts (New York: Thomas Y. Cromwell Company, 1976).

FIGURE 1  
NATIONAL FOUNDATION ON THE ARTS AND THE HUMANITIES



SOURCE: U. S. Government Manual, 1979-1980, p. 605.

FIGURE 2

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS STAFF, 1979-80

National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities

Chairman-----	Livingston Biddle, Jr.
Assistant to the Chairman/Press-----	Florence Lowe
Assistant to the Chairman/Minority Affairs-----	Gordon Braithwaite
Assistant to the Chairman-----	Walter Anderson
General Counsel-----	Robert Wade
Congressional Liaison, Director-----	Donald A. Moore
Deputy, Chairman, Policy and Planning-----	P. David Searles
Policy Development, Director-----	Phillip Kadis
Publications, Director-----	Marcia Sartwell
Budget Officer-----	D. Keith Stephens
Research, Director-----	Harold Horowitz
Evaluation, Director-----	Charles Kirk
Council and Panel Operations, Director-----	John Clark
Special Projects, Program Director-----	Esther Novak
Grants Officer-----	James Thomas
Office of Administration, Director-----	Paul P. Berman
Personnel Officer-----	Charles Mixon
Audit Officer-----	Leon Lilly
Administrative Services Officer-----	Don Case
Accounting Officer-----	Erwin Whitlow
Deputy Chairman, Intergovernmental Activities-----	James L. Edgy, Jr.
Federal-State Partnership, Program Director-----	Henry E. Putsch
Artists-in-Schools, Program Director-----	John H. Kerr
Deputy Chairman, Programs-----	Mary Ann Tighe
Program Coordination, Director-----	Ana Steele
Museums, Program Director-----	Thomas Freudenheim
Music, Program Director-----	Ezra Laderman
Theatre, Program Director-----	Ruth Mayleas
Opera/Musical Theatre, Director-----	James Ireland
Dance, Program Director-----	Rhoda Grauer
Media Arts (Film/Radio/Television), Program Director-----	Brian O'Doherty
Visual Arts, Program Director-----	James Melghert
Architecture, Planning and Design, Program Director-----	Michael Pittas
Folk Arts, Director-----	Bess Lomax Hawes
Literature, Program Director-----	David Wilk
Expansion Arts, Program Director-----	Alfred B. Spellman
Deputy Director, Federal Council in the Arts and Humanities-----	Peter Kyros

SOURCE: U. S. Government Manual, 1979-80, p. 603.

FIGURE 3

MEMBERS OF THE FEDERAL COUNCIL ON THE ARTS  
AND THE HUMANITIES, 1978-79

Joseph D. Duffy  
Chairman, Federal Council on the Arts and Humanities  
and Chairman, National Endowment for the Humanities

Livingston L. Biddle  
Chairman  
National Endowment of the Arts

Ernest L. Boyer  
Commissioner  
U. S. Office of Education

J. Carter Brown  
Chairman, Commission of Fine Arts and  
Director, National Gallery of Arts

Daniel J. Boorstin  
Librarian of Congress  
Library of Congress

James B. Rhoads  
Archivist of the United States  
National Archives and Records Service

Dennis J. Keilman  
Acting Commissioner, Public Building Service  
General Services Administration

William G. Whalem  
Director, National Park Service  
Department of the Interior

Richard C. Atkinson  
Director  
National Science Foundation

J. S. Kimmitt  
Secretary of the Senate  
Executive Secretary of the Senate  
Commission on Arts and Antiquities

FIGURE 3 - Continued

S. Dillion Ripley  
Secretary  
Smithsonian Institution

John Reinhardt  
Director  
International Communication Agency

Fortney H. Stark, Jr.  
Member  
U. S. House of Representatives

Juanita M. Kreps  
Secretary  
Department of Commerce

Brock Adams  
Secretary  
Department of Transportation

George C. Seybolt  
Chairman  
National Museum Service Board

Leila Kimche  
Director  
Institute of Museum Service

Patricia R. Harris  
Secretary  
Department of Housing and Urban Development

Paul E. Goulding  
Acting Administrator  
General Services Administration

SOURCE: U. S. Government Manual, 1979-80.

Table 1).<sup>12</sup> It has been projected that by the mid 1980s, the Endowment's budget will reach \$500 to \$600 million.<sup>13</sup> The Endowment's grant funds are appropriate by Congress under three separate classifications:

- 1) Program Funds: This money is available to the Endowment to award grants to artists and organizations (including state and regional arts agencies) located throughout the country. Funds are generally awarded for fellowships and various types of projects;
- 2) Treasury Funds: This money only becomes available when private donations are received by the Endowment at which time special fund matches pledges from outside donors to specific institutions and organizations; and
- 3) Challenge Grant Funds: The Challenge Grant Program was established by Congress in 1976. "Organizations receiving Challenge Grants must match every federal dollar with at least three dollars from other sources. Grants are awarded on a one-time-only basis but may spread over three years."<sup>14</sup>

#### Staff

The staff of The National Endowment for the Arts is spread out to cover, at least in principle, the enormous activities and programs that it administers. At the top of the Endowment's pyramid is the Office of the Chairman (and staff); next there are three assistant chairmen:

- 1) Assistant to the Chairman/Press; 2) Assistant to the Chairman/Minority

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<sup>12</sup>See Chronicle of Higher Education, "Bill Enacted, Appropriations of The Department of the Interior for Fiscal Year 1980 Provides \$154.5 Million for the National Endowment for the Arts," 11 February 1980, p. 16.

<sup>13</sup>The projected budgets were revealed by the chairman of the budget subcommittee. See Washington International Arts Letter, July-August 1979, p. 2225.

<sup>14</sup>See National Endowment for the Arts: Guide to Programs, 1979.



TABLE 1  
NEA HISTORY OF APPROPRIATIONS\*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Amount</u>
1966	\$ 2,543,308
1967	7,965,692
1968	7,174,291
1969	7,756,875
1970	8,250,000
1971	15,090,000
1972	29,750,000
1973	38,200,000
1974	60,775,000
1975	74,750,000
1976	82,000,000
1976++	33,937,000
1977	94,000,000
1978	114,000,000
1979	139,660,000
1980=	154,400,000

\* See National Endowment for the Arts, Annual Report, 1978, pp. 269-271.

++ Appropriations for "Transition Quarter," July 1, 1976 to September 30, 1976. Fiscal year for U. S. Government changed from July 1 to October 1.

= See Chronicle of Higher Education, "Bill Enacted," February 11, 1980, p. 16.

SOURCES: See the above references.

Affairs; and 3) Assistant to the Chairman. These positions are followed by: the General Counsel for the Arts; the Congressional Liaison Director; the Deputy Chairman for Policy and Planning; and the Director of Policy Development. Then there are the program areas: Architecture and Environment Arts (with a director, assistant and staff); Federal Design Unit (staff); Federal Graphics Unit (staff); Dance (director and staff); Education (director and staff); Expansion Arts (director, assistant director, and staff); Music (director, assistant director, and staff); Special Projects, which has a number of components (e.g., Director of Special Project and staff; Folk Arts Program (director and staff); Challenge Grants (coordinator and staff); Special Constituencies (coordinator); Theatre (director and staff); Visual Arts, which has a number of components also (director, assistant director and staff); Craft Coordinator, Works of Art in Public Places Coordinator; Office of Budget (director and staff); Evaluation (director and staff); and Grants (which is a very weeded out component. Within this unit, there are five subdivisions: 1) Grants Officer, Special Assistant to the Grants Officer and staff; 2) Application Section and staff; 3) Grants Section and staff; 4) Reports/Review Section and staff; and 5) Correspondence Section Supervisor and staff. There is a program information director and staff; The Cultural Post, which is the Endowment's newsletter, and its staff; Design Staff; Library and staff; Research (director and staff); Council and Panel Operations (director and staff); and The Office of the Secretary to the National Council of the Arts.

In 1979, the staff of the Endowment constituted a total of 315 individuals. These individuals administer the functions of the Endowment. It is in and through these offices and individuals that the bulk of the Endowment's processing activities take place. At various points within each of the above components, vital decisions are made that help determine who gets what, and why, from the Endowment.

#### Program

The Endowment awards grants through eight programs that represent specific arts disciplines: Architecture, Planning and Design; Dance; Literature; Media Arts; Film/Radio/Television; Museums; Theatre; and Visual Arts; and five interdisciplinary programs: Education; Expansion Arts; Federal-State Partnership; Folk Arts and Special Projects.

#### Architecture, Planning and Design

The Architecture, Planning and Design Program promotes excellence in design by funding activities in architecture; landscape architecture; urban design; city and regional planning; and graphic, interior, industrial, and other professional design fields. The Architecture, Planning and Design Program awards grants under two categories: 1) Individuals (e.g., professional fellowships) and Organization (e.g., livable cities; and 2) Design (communication and research and cultural facilities research and design).

#### Dance

The Dance Program aids the creative individual, strengthens professional dance companies, makes high quality dance available to new

audiences, and encourages the development of new ideas, forms, and techniques. The Dance Program awards grants under three categories: touring (e.g., small company touring program, large company touring program, and long-term dance engagements); individuals (e.g., Choreography Fellowships and film and video grants); dance organizations (e.g., choreography, professional companies in residence, rehearsal support, artistic personnel and management and administration); and other organizations (e.g., dance, film, video and sponsors of local companies).

#### Education

The chief goal of the Education Program has been to give students and teachers an opportunity to develop an appreciation of art by working with professional artists in the classroom or in community projects. The Education Program awards grants in three categories:<sup>15</sup> learning through the arts; Artist-in-Schools Program; and arts administration.

#### Expansion Arts

The Expansion Arts Program reflects the Endowment's desire to expand the involvement of all Americans in the arts and to encourage the artistic expression of the nation's diverse cultural groups. It carries out these goals by supporting neighborhood and community arts organizations, directed by professionals, in cities, towns and rural areas.

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<sup>15</sup>The Endowment's Education Program is not open to general application. The Endowment does not give grants directly to artists or schools. Matching grants are awarded to state arts agencies and a few other organizations which administer the Artists-in-Schools Program and select the artists and the sites that will participate.

The Expansion Arts Program awards grants in eight categories: instruction and training; arts exposure programs; special summer projects; community cultural centers; services to neighborhood arts organizations; regional tour events; neighborhoods arts consortia; and comprehensive technical assistance program (this is a service program).

#### Federal-State Partnership

The Federal-State Partnership provides basic support for the arts nationwide as well as grants based on Endowment approval of plans. Instead of funding individual artists or arts organizations within a particular discipline, the program administers federal support for the arts through state and regional arts agencies. The Endowment is required by law to make available 20 percent of its program's funds appropriated by Congress to these state and regional agencies. The Federal-State Partnership awards grants in three ways: state grants; regional grants; and grants for support services.

#### Folk Arts

The Folk Arts Program encourages and preserves the traditional arts identified with the many subgroups in the nation--groups that share the same ethnic heritage, language, occupation, religion or geographic area. Among these folk arts are music, dance, song, poetry, tales, oratory, crafts and rituals. Grants are awarded to such groups as community and cultural organizations, tribes, media centers, educational institutions, professional societies, and state and local agencies. The Folk Arts Program does not have funding categories as such. It supports activities

under three broad classifications: presentation of traditional arts and artists; documentation of traditional arts; and inventive and imaginative proposals.

### Literature

The Literature Program aids creative writers--poets, novelists, short story writers, playwrights, essayists and literary critics. It does so through direct fellowships, funding of residencies for writers, and support of noncommercial magazines and small presses that publish the work of creative writers. The Literature Program awards two types of grants: individual (e.g., fellowship for creative writers and residences for writers) and organizations (e.g., assistance to small presses and assistance to literary magazines).

### Media Arts: Film/Radio/Television

The Media Arts Program helps individuals and organizations produce, exhibit and preserve film, video and radio works. The Program supports the activities of the American Film Institute in archival work, education, advance training, filmmaker grants, and research and publication. The Media Arts Program also jointly funds projects with the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. With the cooperation of theatre owners, the Endowment encourages the showing of what it considers outstanding short films by American filmmakers. The Media Arts Film/Radio/Television Program awards grants in two basic categories: organization (e.g., media arts centers, aid to film/video exhibitions, in-residence/workshop program; production and American Film Institute/Arts Endowment Film);

and individuals (e.g., fellowships, American Film Institute Independent Filmmakers, video artists fellowships, and The Independent Documentary Fund for Public Television).

### Museums

The Museums Program offers support for essential museum functions: acquisition, interpretation, and preservation. Art history, science, and children's museums are eligible for grants. Grants are awarded on the merits of the proposed projects, location, or operating budget of the museum. The Museum Program awards grants in two categories: museums and other organizations (e.g., museum purchase plan, special exhibition, wider availability museums, cooperative programs, utilization of museum collections, catalogue, conservation, renovation, museum training, and visiting specialists) and individuals (e.g., fellowships for museum professionals).

### Music

The goals of the Music Program are to support creativity and excellence in music performance and to develop informed audiences for music. Grants are awarded to a range of organizations and individuals. The Music Program awards grants in four categories: orchestras, ensembles--contemporary music; jazz (e.g., fellowships for composer/performers, study fellowships, and organizations); and composer/librettist fellowship.

### Special Projects

Special Projects fund prototype projects that cut across several arts disciplines that are not eligible for funding under any other Endowment program and have potential national or regional impact. The Special Projects Program awards grants in three categories: special projects category; grant program for arts centers and festivals; and services to the field.

### Theater

The Theater Program aids primarily nonprofit professional theaters. Support goes to companies that present the traditional classics of drama as well as to those that specialize in new experimental works. The objectives of the theater programs are threefold: strengthen existing theaters; make high quality theater available to as many Americans as possible; and encourage the development of new talent in the field. The Theater Program awards grants in six categories: large professional theater companies; professional theater companies with short seasons; small professional theater companies; professional theater for youth; professional theater training; and professional theater touring (pilot).

### Visual Arts

The Visual Arts Program awards fellowships to visual artists working in a wide range of media and makes grants to nonprofit, tax-exempt organizations to assist visual artists. Grants are awarded in nine categories: artists' fellowship; artists' spaces; art in public places; residencies for arts, craftman, photographers and critics; photography



exhibition aid; photography publications; photography surveys; crafts exhibition aid; and craft workshop.<sup>16</sup>

On each of these particular programs, the Endowment has a panel:

In its work, the NEA and the National Council on the Arts are assisted by advisory panels--recognized as knowledgeable individuals who serve the individual programs. Depending on the characteristics of the particular program (e.g., field), this panel may vary. However, they are generally composed of art administrators, artists, board members, and other individuals from a vast range.

More than 500 private citizens serve on these panels. They are appointed by the Chairman (generally three- or four-year terms) with the advice of Council and staff as well as other organizations and leaders in the field.

Panelists review grants applications, evaluate past programs and advise Endowment staff and the National Council on the Arts, which is responsible for final recommendations to the Chairman.<sup>17</sup>

It is this panel system which has come under sharp criticism by a House Appropriations Committee Report. The report pointed out that: "the panel system or 'peer review system' is the heart of the National Endowment's operations."<sup>18</sup> In this regard, it concluded that the selection of panelists and the panel operation process is the keystone of the Endowment. The report argued that:

The problem in peer review faced by the Endowment is the selection of a panel of experts in a field who can offer quality judgments acceptable to the field because of recognized competence and yet seek an ever-broadening geographical and social representation of the various art

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<sup>16</sup>Descriptions for the various Endowment programs were obtained from The National Endowment for the Arts: Guide to Programs, 1979.

<sup>17</sup>The National Endowment for the Arts, National Council on the Arts, Annual Report, 1978.

<sup>18</sup>See "Congress Investigation Completed," Washington International Arts Letter (July-August 1979):2222.

disciplines that have traditionally been compartmentalized, specialized, and representative of white Western-European Cultural.<sup>19</sup>

While the investigators acknowledged the fact that most of the individuals are widely recognized and respected in their fields, they argued that the continued reliance by NEA on these individuals creates a "closed circle" of opinion consistently sought and offered to the NEA.<sup>20</sup> It was pointed out that:

It was not uncommon for one individual to be chairman of a state's art agency, a member of an NEA program panel, a contract employee of the NEA, and an advisor to other Endowment functions simultaneously. Another NEA panel chairman was a panel member in a different program and under contract to NEA at the same time to perform other functions. In both cases, the individuals were not precluded from other NEA participation, such as receipt of grant funds to affiliated groups, organizations, or the person individually.<sup>21</sup>

In May of 1978, the Washington International Arts Letter published a comprehensive listing of panelists and consultants for the Endowment.

In publishing the list, it wrote that:

This publication of this list is another first for the "Letter." Never before under one consolidation could constituents obtain names and addresses of all panelists and consultants to the National Endowment for the Arts. For some years after the Endowment came into being it refused to make known the names of "outside" advisors; then under pressure mainly brought about by this publication it was told to do so by the Senate. Even after that

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

some program directors tried to circumvent the Senate directive.<sup>22</sup>

The Letter commented on the credibility of the panelists and consultants by stating that, "it has been said that some are known only to their mothers and a few professionals in their fields."<sup>23</sup>

A private foundation consultant charged that: "...it was possible to lobby personally at the Endowment and find a friend on the panel who can call special attention to a grant request."<sup>24</sup> These and other charges led Chairman Biddle to respond by saying that the Endowment had "made special efforts over the past months to examine the panel system and make it more responsive than it was before."<sup>25</sup> It was revealed in the Washington International Arts Letter that:

Even with recent emphasis on broadening representation, the Investigative Staff found the NEA to rely heavily on what could be termed a "closed circle" of advisors....The composition of task forces, committees, consultants, contractors, and panels represents a repetitive use of the same individuals.<sup>26</sup>

Concerns have also been raised about a number of former staff members of the Endowment who are now employed by Endowment grantees. House Appropriations Chairman Sidney Yates raised this concern with Chairman

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<sup>22</sup>See "Directory of Panelist and Consultants: National Endowment for the Arts," Washington International Arts Letter vol. XVII, no. 5 (May 1978):1.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup>Malcolm N. Carter, "The National Endowment for the Arts Grows Up," Arts News vol. 78, no. 7 (September 1979):61.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 60.

<sup>26</sup>"Congress Investigation Completed," p. 2222.

Biddle. Mr. Biddle responded to Mr. Yates by pointing out that: "It was in part a 'compassionate' action and that these people so placed were resources which the world of the arts could not well afford to lose."<sup>27</sup> It was at this point that Yates reminded Biddle of the policies and criticisms that had been focused on former employees of the Defense Department and jobs with contractors to it (the military-industrial complex). Biddle did not reply to these comments raised by Congressman Yates.<sup>28</sup> Many of the charges against the Endowment are not new. In 1977, when the Endowment received its largest appropriations up until that time (\$96 million), Rep. Yates complained that "the arts agency financed only established groups."<sup>29</sup>

In response to much of the criticism that had been raised from various concerns, in August of 1978, for the first time in its history, the Endowment adopted a statement of policy. Its goals and policies were stated in its Preamble which read:

This statement of goal of The National Endowment for the Arts, its role and responsibilities in the artistic life of the nation, is rooted in certain fundamental convictions.

These include the belief that there is a response to the world which may be termed aesthetic awareness, a distinctive perception of the aesthetic dimension of our physical and social environment.

This perception is unique to humankind and has existed as a fundamental part of all human societies from the earliest times. It is through the various arts that this

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 2224.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Grace Gleuck, "Record Budget for Arts Gain," New York Times, 12 May 1977, p. 26-C.

perception of the world is sharpened, enlivened, expressed, and developed as a celebration of life in all its forms.

Cultivation of this awareness is a societal good as it quickens the experience of life and enhances its quality. Thus, the condition of the arts is an appropriate concern of government. In recognition of this fact, The National Endowment for the Arts was created.

It is not the intention of this statement to define "art." The term is to be understood in its broadest sense; that is, with full cognizance of the pluralistic nature of the arts in America, with a deliberate decision to disclaim any endorsement of an "official" arts, and with a full commitment to artistic freedom.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>"Statement of Goals and Policies," National Endowment for the Arts: Guide to Programs, Preamble, p. 39.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE NEA AND THE GOVERNMENT

In recent years, there has been a growing increase in both awareness and concern about the funding of the arts in America.<sup>1</sup> Representatives from cultural institutions and organizations have asserted themselves more aggressively, as they have to influence legislators who formulate and evaluate legislation relating to the appropriation and the allocation of funds for the arts. The increased needs, awareness and concerns for the state of the arts have provoked interest in the traditional "non-arts" oriented public sector.

In 1975, Congressman Fred Richmond (D-N. Y.) introduced legislation<sup>2</sup> in the United States Congress that, if passed, would have opened up the possibility for additional funding for the arts. It was a popular belief

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<sup>1</sup>The importance of this issue was raised in an article in U. S. News and World Report (August 8, 1977). In an article entitled, "The Cultural Boom," it was pointed out that "all across the nation, theatre, ballet, opera and museums have become smash hits--topping even old favorites such as baseball. It's part of an insatiable market for culture that is transforming America" (p. 50). John Gingrich, President of the Association of American Dance Companies, "credits the National Endowment for the Arts for part of the growth" (p. 53). It was also revealed that "...the federally funded National Endowment for the Arts spends 85 million dollars a year on cultural enterprises."

<sup>2</sup>Congressman Richmond's Bill (HR 1042) instructs the Internal Revenue Service to place three check off boxes on the first page of the income tax forms, allowing the taxpayer to contribute to the arts (via the National Endowment for the Humanities), or both. One-hundred and fifty-eight members of Congress signed as co-sponsors of the legislation. It is projected that such a bill would generate \$1 billion annually.

within the arts community that the bill would generate millions of dollars for the National Endowment for the Arts and subsequently more funds for arts institutions and organizations across the nation. The bill did not pass however. On the other hand, the thrust did not die.

After Jimmy Carter became President, he appointed Joan Mondale (wife to Vice-President Walter Mondale) to head the new administration's program for special concerns of the arts.<sup>3</sup> This gesture by the President satisfied, to some extent, the general concerns by the broader arts community in America. Another voiced concerned by the President was his statements regarding changes in racial, ethnic, and sexual composition of the Endowment, and its implications with regards to funding for various groups, organizations, and individuals.<sup>4</sup> Supposedly, there was to be an effort on the part of the Carter Administration to see what was needed or desirable for a more representative and effective Endowment and to work toward bringing about the necessary changes.

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<sup>3</sup>Joan Mondale was appointed Honorary Chairman of The Federal Council on the Arts and Humanities.

<sup>4</sup>See Atlanta Daily World, "28 U. S. Agencies Directed to Develop Civil Rights Efforts," 5 January, 1978. The Department of Justice directed 28 federal departments and agencies to develop plans for the enforcement of a civil rights law prohibiting discrimination in federally assisted programs. President Carter issued a memorandum in July (1977) requesting Attorney General Griffin Bell to monitor certain federal agencies "to make sure that they are 'doing an effective job' in enforcing Title VI on the Civil Rights Act of 1964." The National Endowment for the Arts was one of the 28 federal agencies cited. This network of federal agencies operate approximately 400 programs covered by Title VI and dispenses an estimated \$70 billion a year in federal funds.

A number of measures were adopted within the Carter Administration, the Endowment, and arts institutions and organization to clarify these voiced concerns. In 1976, the Congressional Black Caucus formed a special committee within its body to devote attention to the funding of Black institutions and organizations, and Black representation on the Endowment's many panels and programs.<sup>5</sup>

After the Caucus established the committee, a number of strategy sessions were held in Washington, D. C., with Caucus members, the National Ad Hoc Committee on African-American Contribution to the Arts, and members from various Black institutions and organizations from across the nation. The central issues were: 1) inequitable distribution of federal arts and humanities funding to minority programs; 2) the slim allotment of contracts to minority firms; and 3) increase in the number of top level minorities at the Endowment.

After Nancy Hanks resigned as Chairman of the Endowment in 1977, President Carter nominated Livingston Biddle, Jr. as her successor. The

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<sup>5</sup>The Congressional Black Caucus Braintrust on the Arts and Humanities was headed by former Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm (D-N. Y.). The committee also focused attention on the National Endowment for the Humanities and other federal funding agencies. As reported in Congressional Black Caucus' For the People (The Caucus' Newsletter - Third/Fourth Quarter Legislative Report 1978), "The Chairman of the Arts Endowment, Livingston Biddle, announced the appointment of Gordon Braithwaite as the Chairman's special representative for minority concerns ...to serve as a liaison and as a developer of policy initiatives which are needed to make the Endowment more responsive to Black concerns" (p. 3). Also, see Black Enterprise (December 1977), "Feuding, Fussing and Fighting: Funding the Arts in America," writer A. Peter Bailey quotes Ellis Haizlip as saying: "Most all of the arts funding decisions on both the public and private levels are being made without any significant contribution from concerned black people" (p. 80).



selection of Biddle to replace Nancy Hanks caused considerable political debate in Washington initially. Basically, the core of the debate stemmed from the charges that the selection of Endowment staff had become very political. It is known in the Washington, D. C. political arena that Senator Clairborne Pell (D-Rhode Island) is the most influential individual on Capitol Hill in the area of the arts.<sup>6</sup> There were charges that the selection of Biddle had as much to do with his boyhood relationship with Senator Pell as it had to do with his qualifications for the position. In fact, Michael Straight, former Acting Chairman of the Endowment, was quoted in two separate New York Times articles in making his feelings known. Straight charged that "the selection of Biddle puts the Endowment in grave danger of being politicized."<sup>7</sup> He also charged that Biddle's appointment was a political payoff for being "Senator Pell's old college roommate."<sup>8</sup>

It was also pointed out in the New York Times article that a very strong challenger to Biddle for the position was Peggy Cooper, founder and developer of the Duke Ellington High School of the Performing Arts/Workshops for Careers in the Arts. Miss Cooper was quoted as saying that, "...she believed that opposition to her came from 'big art'--

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<sup>6</sup>Senator Pell is Chairman of the Senate Subcommittee for Education, Arts, and Humanities. He was first elected to the Senate in 1960.

<sup>7</sup>"How Nancy Hanks' Successor Was Chosen," New York Times, 16 October 1977, p. 36-D.

<sup>8</sup>"Whither the National Arts and Humanities Endowment," New York Times, 18 December 1977, p. 35-D.

the old, established organizations, because of her commitment to 'community programming.'"<sup>9</sup> She also "suggested that the arts establishment is not yet ready for a Chairman who is young and black."<sup>10</sup> The writer of the article went on to confirm some of Miss Cooper's contentions by pointing out that "several people who directed large organizations voiced negative views about Miss Cooper's candidacy."<sup>11</sup> He wrote that the director of one such institution said "everybody was terrified of her."<sup>12</sup>

In August 1979, serious charges were made against the Endowment and its operation procedures by the House Appropriations Committee.<sup>13</sup> The Committee released a report which questioned its ability to perform;

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<sup>9</sup>"How Nancy Hanks' Successor Was Chosen," One of the particular concerns of the Congressional Black Caucus' Braintrust on the Arts and Humanities has been neighborhood programs. Community programming tends not to be of particular concern to the art establishment. See Grassroots and Pavements (GAP). Newsbrief vol. 1, no. 3, "Chisholm Talks Art," commenting in an interview, Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm argued that: "The artistic merit of neighborhood arts must be recognized and supported if they are to continue to contribute to the enhancement of community life. Neighborhood arts are often not viewed as "legitimate arts." This image must be changed. Community arts must receive the kind of recognition and financial support from established institutions, like the National Endowment for the Arts."

<sup>10</sup>"How Nancy Hanks's Successor Was Chosen."

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>The House Appropriations Committee oversees the appropriation and allocation of funds to the Endowment. The committee is chaired by Rep. Sidney Yates (D-IL.). The committee's investigators (The Surveys and Investigation Staff) observed the NEA's operations, policies, programs and procedures.

its fairness; and its commitment to its legislative mandate. The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior released the study after a nine-month investigation of the Endowment. Some of the conclusions of the investigation even led some of those who authorized it to denounce its findings. The report concluded the following:

- 1) The NEA operates with poor management procedures;
- 2) The NEA abrogated its leadership role and allowed projected applications to become a surrogate national policy, shaping the program of the Endowment;
- 3) The composition of task, committees, panels and consultant teams is, at best, a study in the repetitive use of the same individuals....The "close circle" also provides the appearance of, and possibly the fact of, favoritism in awards; and
- 4) The NEA cannot make a fair or informed quality judgment or reflect the plurality that is art in America.

While the Endowment Chairman dismissed the charges in the report as being inaccurate, he maintained "it required us to do a great deal of soul-searching."<sup>14</sup>

The Endowment has maintained that one of its primary concerns is to perpetuate "cultural pluralism." It has professed to be fully "cognizance of the pluralistic nature of the arts in America." However, one might wonder what is the Endowment's concept of "full cognizance" or does it make a difference in its programming. Vantile Whitfield, former Director of Expansion Arts at the Endowment, commenting on the slices of the federal, state and municipal budget pies, argued that:

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<sup>14</sup>See "The National Endowment for the Arts Grows Up," Art News vol. 78, no. 7 (September 1979):59.

Infinitely smaller fractions of these slices are doled out to the isolated, indigenous art forms; the largest portions of these slices are seemingly predestined for "major institutions" in the arts. It is common knowledge that most of these "major institutions" exist primarily to preserve and glorify European art only.<sup>15</sup>

With the bulk of the Endowment's budget going to major institutions, "testifying before the House Appropriations Committee on the 1980 budget for the Endowment, Shirley Chisholm, Chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus' Braintrust on the Arts and the Humanities, called for a plan by which language is stressed in the NEA's budget "demonstrating a plan for increased access to funding by minorities and other underrepresented groups."<sup>16</sup> She also "sharply criticized the NEA for inequitable distribution of federal arts funding to minority programs and the slim allotment of contracts to minority firms."<sup>17</sup> Congresswoman Chisholm also emphasized the need to increase the number of top level minorities at the Endowment. She concluded her testimony by stating that: "Realizing the historic contributions which blacks and Hispanics have made to America's cultural expression, it is inconceivable that only five percent is estimated to have been awarded to minority groups."<sup>18</sup>

Perhaps in defense of the Endowment's programs and processes, some overtones concerning these and other issues were prevalent in a speech

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<sup>15</sup> See "Linkage among the Arts," Grassroots and Pavements vol. 1, no. 2 (1979).

<sup>16</sup> See "Hill Hearing on the Arts," Grassroots and Pavements vol. 1, no. 2 (1979).

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

by the Endowment's Chairman, Livingston L. Biddle, Jr. Biddle stated that:

We find words like "elitism" and "populism" being used to suggest a polarization of the arts. Some suggest that elitism applies to the quality of our major arts institutions, our orchestras, our opera companies, our dance and theatre organizations, our museums. And some suggest that "populism" applies to an opposite and perhaps equally separate domain--the state and local organizations which represent the arts at the grassroots. And some even suggest that lines should be drawn and alternatives chosen.

I am convinced of a very different means of defining our cultural goals. It seems to me that "elitism" can indeed mean quality, can indeed mean "the best"--that is a proper dictionary meaning for the word. And "populism" I would suggest can mean "access." Access to the arts all across the land. Why not bridge these two words--why not join them in harmony, rather than in discord?--and simply say that together they can mean "access to the best."<sup>19</sup>

It is this kind of "rationale" that is being contested at the Endowment level. Just what does "access to the best" really mean?" And furthermore, who determines what is "the best?" Since the term best is relative, what are the processes for determining, objectively, what and who is "best"? And then of course, the question must always be kept in mind, best for whom? These particular questions will be qualified in the next two chapters.

In an issue of Grassroots and Pavement, a reflection of NEA was presented in a "Rountable with: The NEA Leadership." The article clearly stated that:

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<sup>19</sup>Chairman Biddle made these statements while speaking before a nominating hearing of the Committee on Human Resources of the United States Senate on November 2, 1977.

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) is in the business of supporting the advancement of the American cultural legacy. It is a monumental task undertaken by a federal agency which, throughout its history, has been plagued by budget limitations. On the one hand, NEA has to defend against allegations of being too "elitist," and too "populist" on the other. While balancing these charges, it has to provide cultural enrichment, foster educational awareness, promote human services and nurture civic values.

The fact that NEA's mandate is unclear to many Americans stems from basic misconceptions about the arts. A number of stereotypes and generalizations have been applied against people in the arts, practitioners and patrons alike, as well as against cultural institutions and arts support organizations.

The NEA's constituents are all Americans--rich and poor, ethnic majorities and minorities, young and old, urban and rural. The arts touch every facet of American life. They are an expression of cultural values....As the NEA continues to expand, the controversies will continue to grow. Public appeal breeds public opinion.<sup>20</sup>

From their perspectives, the administrators at the top levels within the Endowment presented their views. Mary Ann Tighe, Deputy Chairman for Programs:

No single person knows what "art" is, and the Endowment has to be very aware of that fact. You know, there has always been that feeling among the public that we're the arts, and that most of our judgment are subjective, having more to do with personal response. Of course, that's true. But I think a lot of times, we at the Endowment have used that as an excuse, without saying clearly why we're doing something. After listening to a lot of people, the need is clearly for us to be able to articulate what we're doing and to be accountable for it. I think we've been working toward that goal.<sup>21</sup>

A. B. Spellman, Director of the Expansion Arts Program asserted that:

The momentum is with neighborhood arts. The neighborhood arts movement is much of the arts landscape. It's like a pyramid and at the base are the neighborhoods. I also think

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<sup>20</sup>See "Roundtable with: The NEA Leadership," Grassroots and Pavement (GAP) vol. 1, no. 2.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

that the concept of 21st century American art is vested in communities. The communities that we (Expansion Arts) support are very, very rich in culture, but very poor in institutions. As we support more organizations which work directly with these cultural sources, we'll find artistic expressions which won't be as monochromatic as the arts of the 20th century. Look at all that genius that got left out simply because there was nowhere to go.<sup>22</sup>

Gordon Braithwaite, Special Assistant to the Chairman for Minority

Concerns argued in a similar vein that:

We are trying to reorganize different arts initiatives from all over the nation. We respect their contributions and integrity. The arts used to be viewed as an isolated phenomenon; now we see them as an integral part of our every day life. For us, culture is a mirror of our nation's legacy.<sup>23</sup>

Another significant aspect of the Endowment is its international program. In 1978, the Endowment expanded its international activities.

As reported in the Endowment's Annual Report for 1978:

The Endowment and its panels will advise the International Communication Agency (ICA) on international cultural exhibitions and events. In a memorandum of understanding, the White House outlines how the cooperative ventures works. ICA --which was created in 1977 by merging the State Department's Bureau of Cultural Affairs, the United States Information Agency, and the Voice of America--will present the Endowment chairman with "comprehensive lists of overseas opportunities for art exhibitions, performing arts events, speakers, and other types of cultural activities." ICA also will submit a list of organizations, artists, and scholars interested in traveling or sending works abroad. The Endowment's advisory panels will then review the lists and select and rank final choices. Final decisions on specific exchange activities and participants will rest with the director of the ICA.

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

The Endowment will also provide ICA with lists of their grantees and cultural activities around the United States.... As a result, ICA will be continuously posted on arts events in this country....<sup>24</sup>

On the subject of the United States Information Agency, J. William Fulbright writes in his book, The Pentagon Propaganda Machine:

Although the Department of State is supposedly responsible for cultural exchanges, Defense with State, The United States Information Agency and the White House, sponsored tours of this country by foreign journalists. Between 1966 and 1969, about 200 of them were brought here from Europe, Africa, South and East Asia, and the Pacific. Transportation within the United States was by military installations.<sup>25</sup>

Given these realities, certain implications are revealed with respect to the role of "cultural politics" and U. S. public policy. As reported in U. S. News and World Report, "While America's political prestige may be declining in some areas of the world, this nation's reputation as cultural leader is at an all-time high--and still growing."<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>See Annual Report, 1978, p. 11.

<sup>25</sup>J. William Fulbright, The Pentagon Propaganda Machine (New York: Liveright, 1979), p. 34.

<sup>26</sup>"The Cultural Boom," U. S. News and World Report, 8 August 1977, pp. 50-53.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE NEA MAZE

"God forbid we ever have government policy for the arts, per se. That would remind me of Nazi Germany, or something of that sort, where the government sets what the policy should be. It should not."<sup>1</sup>

The continued examination of the Endowment has led to a number of "changes" in its operations. As an attempt to give adequate explanations concerning the review process; the categorizing of applications process; staffing procedures; and various other procedures, certain particular issues are focused on in this chapter. Specific focus is on Chairman of the Arts Endowment, Livingston Biddle, Jr.'s testimony before the Senate Subcommittee on Education, Arts and Humanities and the Committee on Labor and Human Resources; Chairperson of the Congressional Black Caucus' Braintrust on the Arts and the Humanities, Congresswomen Shirley Chisholm's testimony before The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior; Special Assistant to the Endowment Chairman for Minority Concerns, Gordon Braithwaite's presentation to The Southern Regional Black Arts Conference held at The Atlanta University Center in October 1979; NEA's 1978 Challenge Grant Awards; and The National Assembly of State Arts Agencies and their relationship to the Endowment and "small groups and struggling artists" (see Figure 4).

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<sup>1</sup>Senator Clairborne Pell, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Education, Arts and the Humanities of the Committee on Labor and Human Resources, June 26, 1979.

FIGURE 4

NEA CHALLENGE GRANT AWARDS, 1978

The listing below reflect the basic interest (in dollar amounts) of the NEA's 1978 Challenge Grant Program.

<u>Institutions and Organizations</u>	<u>Amount Awarded</u>
National Symphony Orchestra (Washington, D. C.)	\$ 1,000,000
Metropolitan Opera Association (New York City)	1,500,000
Musical Arts Association (Cleveland Orchestra)	1,000,000
Carnegie Institute of Pittsburgh Symphony Society, Inc.	2,000,000
Detroit Symphony Orchestra	1,000,000
Lyric Opera of Chicago	600,000
St. Louis Symphony Society	1,000,000
Baltimore Symphony Orchestra	600,000
Boston Symphony	850,000
Dallas Symphony Orchestra	450,000
Denver Symphony Orchestra	450,000
Minnesota Orchestra Association	750,000
New York City Opera	700,000
Orchestral Association/Chicago Symphony	1,000,000
Rochester Philaharmonic (New York)	450,000
San Francisco Opera	750,000
San Francisco Symphony Association	750,000

FIGURE 4 - Continued

<u>Institutions and Organizations</u>	<u>Amount Awarded</u>
Seattle Opera Association	350,000
Seattle Symphony	600,000
Houston Grand Opera Association	500,000
Utah Symphony	365,000
Museum of Modern Art (New York City)	1,000,000
Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts (New York City)	500,000
The City Center of Music and Drama (New York City Ballet)	1,000,000
Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Science (New York)	1,000,000
Baltimore Museum of Art	800,000
Performing Arts Center of the Music Center of Los Angeles	2,040,000
Sponsors of the San Francisco Performing Arts Center, Inc.	1,000,000
Ballet Theatre Foundation/American Ballet Theatre (New York City)	1,000,000
Cincinnati Institute of Fine Art	2,000,000
Carnegie Hall Society	750,000
Guggenheim (Solomon R.) Museum	1,000,000
Minnesota Public Radio	500,000
New York Shakespeare Festival	450,000
Philharmonic Symphony Society of New York	850,000
Whitney Museum of American Art (New York City)	750,000

FIGURE 4 - Continued

<u>Institutions and Organizations</u>	<u>Amount Awarded</u>
Foundation for the Joffrey Ballet, Inc. (New York City)	450,000

SOURCE: National Endowment for the Arts, National Council on the Arts, Annual Report, 1978. See the section titled "Challenge Grants," pp. 56-68.

The decisions that are made at the Endowment concerning grants and applications take place within various panels. During the past few years, a number of criticisms have been raised concerning the panel system. One reaction to this various criticisms came forth from Endowment Chairman Livingston Biddle, Jr. On April 6, 1978, he sent out a memorandum to "All Endowment Staff and All Parties Concerned." The specific subject of the memo was "Rotation Policy."

Biddle took the opportunity to explain that since his appointment (November 1977), he had had numerous discussions with Program Directors, the National Council on the Arts, and with other leaders in the arts community. As a result of these discussions, he was proposing that a number of "changes" be made within the structure of the Endowment. As such, he had appointed three additional Deputy Chairmen. He explained this change by stating that:

The appointment of three Deputy Chairmen--rather than the one in previous years--was motivated by a desire to make the Endowment as responsive as possible, in our major areas

of interest and endeavor, to the changing and mounting needs of the arts and the growing demands on the Endowment.<sup>2</sup>

Biddle pointed out that he felt that the Endowment had the immense responsibility to keep the arts evolving. He argued that: "the Endowment had served as a catalyst in accord with its mandate."<sup>3</sup> This particular issue is one that the Endowment has had to confront consistently. The question as to whether the Endowment has fulfilled its legislative mandate is one that has not been clearly justified by all responsible parties.

To give further explanations to the changes that were being proposed, Biddle wrote:

With respect to the Chairman, the Council, and the Panels, rotation is a part of our historic development and basic philosophy. And I believe this philosophy should apply to the positions of our Program Directors. In some important respects, their positions are the most sensitive of all. No Chairman, no Deputy, no single Council Member, no Panelist, can be fully knowledgeable in all fields of the arts. The Program Directors, however, have a special responsibility, a special proximity to the major art forms. Special reliance is placed on their abilities. The principle of rotation, in my view, would be incomplete without their involvement in the process.<sup>4</sup>

Biddle also expressed his feelings that no one, regardless of their position, should serve within the Endowment forever. He called for a

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<sup>2</sup>See Arts, Humanities, and Museum Service Act of 1979. Hearing before the Subcommittee on Education, Arts and Humanities of the Committee on Labor and Human Resources: United States Senate, Ninety-Sixth Congress, First Session on S. 1386, June 26-28, 1979, p. 63.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 64.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

rotation system; with principle and fairness. He indicated that: "within the principle of rotation....Each program area and its leadership should be carefully assessed year by year. No arbitrary kind of uniformity should apply."<sup>5</sup> He also revealed that his intention was to make the Arts Endowment "an increasing resource for all fields"<sup>6</sup> and to those who work at the Endowment. These were the basic concerns raised by Biddle. However, two very specific issues were not raised in his memorandum. Who are the people that are being rotated? What, if any, is the relationship between: 1) a rotating policy; 2) "an increasing resource for all fields"; and 3) an increasing resource for all ethnic and racial groups?

Another response to the charges raised against the Endowment came from one of the deputy directors. Under the direction of Deputy Director of Programs, Mary Ann Tighe, the Endowment conducted a self-study to evaluate its operation. In late 1978, the study was completed. As a result of this study, a number of reforms were recommended and a number of measures were proposed. Endowment Chairman, Livingston Biddle, Jr., testified on June 26, 1979 before the Senate Subcommittee on Education, Arts and Humanities of the Committee on Labor and Human Resources on a bill to reauthorize The National Endowment for the Arts. He presented to the committee the Endowment's recommendations for change.

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 65.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

He stated that:

The study recommended that each program have a standing policy panel and grant panels whose duties would be limited to application review and specific recommendations arising from application review. Previously, there were no standing policy panels.<sup>7</sup>

This study found an overburdened system--larger and larger application loads which tended to stretch out the time of panel meetings, making them more and more exhausting, time consuming, and less productive. Most of all the time of the meetings had to be spent on application review, necessarily abbreviating important discussions on policy. As the areas of Endowment support grow more and more sophisticated within a given art form, panelists with specialized information are required, often swelling the size of panels; a panel too large for good discussion, though, seemed to be too small to provide all the first-hand information needed for grant making. Information had not kept pace with increasing applications in several fields. More on-site visits were needed to provide reliable first-hand information on new applications who had never been seen and grantees who had not been seen for some time.

A program's policy panel will consist of 12 to 15 panelists, including a state arts agency representative, and will represent a broad range of professional and aesthetic viewpoints with as much cultural, ethnic and regional distribution as is feasible, that is, from a group of "experts" who have already had some experience with the Endowment's grant making procedures, and like all Endowment panelists, they are

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 113.

approved year by year, serving on the policy panel for a maximum of three years. The policy panel would rotate off by thirds, changing completely every three years. The policy panel develops program directions and guidelines; reviews and recommends on budget allocations with the program; proposes and helps develop pilot projects; and reviews applications under the program's pilot projects.

A program's grant panel would be composed of grant panelists and one or more members of the policy panel. Together with the specific expertise needed, grant panel will provide broad representation in all respects--professional, regional, cultural and aesthetic. All panelists at the Endowment are appointed for one-year terms, while policy panelists could be reappointed for a maximum of two consecutive years. About half the people on the grant panels would rotate off each year to give more of the field an opportunity to participate in and learn about the Endowment process.

In proposing these structural changes, it was the Endowment's belief that this two-tier system of policy and grant panel would have a major impact on improving the quality and fairness of decision making. Separating policy discussions from grant review is a way of more clearly defining function, while the new system provides the necessary linkage between policy and grant function. Moreover, a growing workload is shared among a greater number of participants who, in aggregate, would also provide broader representation from the field. The Endowment has also stressed the point that it is committed to making "every effort



to get panelists and consultants to make on-site visits to as many applicants as possible."<sup>8</sup> It has declared that: "...judgment must no longer be made in the dark or based on heresay. It is the Endowment's responsibility to equip the panelists with all information necessary to make sound, often difficult decisions."<sup>9</sup>

Testifying on May 8, 1979 before The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus' Braintrust on the Arts and the Humanities, Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm raised sharp criticisms of the Endowment. She stated that there were a number of serious issues that need to be addressed by the Endowment. She raised concerns over the fact that there were various programs at the Endowment that award no money to minority applicants. She cited specific examples as the Media Arts and Museum Program. Another aspect of her testimony focused on the lack of grants to Black colleges, while at the same time, millions of dollars are awarded to other postsecondary institutions. She highlighted the point that there have been only four minority firms to receive contract grants from the Endowment.

The testimony was critical of the lack of minorities in managerial positions at the Endowment. She stated that of approximately 80 minority employees, 44 (or 55 percent) were concentrated in clerical positions from GS-1 to GS-7. It was pointed out that only five minorities were included in the total of 315 that make up the NEA's management, and of

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

those five, only three have direct authority over programs (see Table 2). She criticized the Endowment for its lack of minorities in policy-making roles. She pointed out that the Endowment approach to these concerns was to create what is called The Office of Minority Concerns. She argued that this gesture did not even begin to address the existing problems. She concluded her testimony by making several recommendations to the subcommittee. See the appendix for complete text.

Since much of Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm's testimony focused on The Office of Minority Concerns, it is indeed important to this discussion that some light be shed on the function of this office. Gordon Braithwaite, Special Assistant to the Chairman of the Endowment, spoke to The Southern Regional Black Arts Conference on October 13, 1979 in Atlanta, Georgia. He made the following statements:

For the last year, I've been a part of something called Special Assistant to the Chairman for Minority Concerns, sometimes called the Office of Minority Concerns. As you can see, I'm not an office. So if some of you are confused by the capacities or the unevenness of the capability during the last year, as you have approached the Office of Minority Concerns, it is because it is comprised of myself and a clerk-typist. She is overwhelmingly at your service, but we can only do so much. We do have with us an EEO officer who is an individual at all of the federal agencies, and she and her secretary have worked diligently to complement some of the things that we need to do for you. But this is what the Office of Minority Concerns is primarily comprised of.

We were joined by Joe Rodriquez four months ago who specifically was put abroad to attend the needs of the Hispanic Task Force, which has been convening for the last year. So that's the show....

For four years, I was with the Expansion Arts Program which was the primary, and still becomes the primary program for funding most of your projects. That program--expansion arts--is now headed by A. B. Spellman. And then for two years, I was head of a program called "Special Projects,"

TABLE 2  
TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

Grade	Full Time	Part Time	Temporary
GS-1	0	0	0
GS-2	0	2	3
GS-3	0	3	2
GS-4	2	10	10
GS-5	13	21	0
GS-6	11	6	0
GS-7	30	25	0
GS-8	5	0	0
GS-9	36	9	0
GS-10	1	0	0
GS-11	29	4	0
GS-12	24	2	0
GS-13	17	0	0
GS-14	19	1	1
GS-15	24	0	0
GS-16	1	0	0
GS-17	2	0	0
GS-18	1	0	0
Executive Level III	1	0	0
Total	216	83	16

SOURCE: Arts, Humanities, and Museum Services Act of 1979. Hearings before the Subcommittee on Education, Arts and Humanities of the Committee on Labor and Human Resources, United States Senate, 96 Congress, First Session on S. 1386, June 26, 27 and 28, 1979, p. 82.

and then recently I was asked to have the dubious honor of addressing minority concerns in the country for my chairman.

It's dubious because I don't know if everyone wants to hear about it every day, and that's how often we need to talk about it. It is a primary concern of mine and of yours, and hopefully of the agency where I work, but the communication isn't always there. I've sort of been one of those people that has been the cart before the horse, and it has occurred to me that for the last few days that you are the horse....

I have so little opportunity to speak on an intimate basis with Black people around the country, that I must honestly say that I am requesting that the whites think of themselves as Blacks so that none of you will think that I am being hostile. Because I do have some things to say that I perceive as being hostile, and they are not--they are just my concerns for Black people.

If we understand that nothing has happened, we won't be so discouraged. Because as I look at the picture nationally, as I look at what we're discussing from day to day, nothing has really happened.<sup>10</sup>

Perhaps this is the very same reality that Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm alluded to in her testimony to The House Appropriations Subcommittee when she pointed out that, even though the Justice Department and the Endowment's General Counsel had recommended to the Endowment that a Compliance Officer (an Equal Employment Specialist) be hired, the Endowment instead froze the position. What is apparent is that while White House officials have given lip service to altering the structure and practices at the Endowment, things "change" but yet they remain the same. The Endowment's approach to the problems that have been cited is to shift people around in various positions. Congresswoman Chisholm stated in her testimony that she was aware of the Investigations Staff

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<sup>10</sup>These statements were made at The Southern Regional Black Arts Conference, sponsored by the Southern Arts Federation, Atlanta University Center, October 11-13, 1979.

Report to the NEA to reorganize its panel structure. However, she also stated that: "...although I believe that this would enhance the diversity of the review process. I feel it does not go to the core issue: Who will be responsible for overseeing access and equity to the Endowment's programs?"<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

## CHAPTER V

### THE NEA AND THE POLITICS OF CULTURE

To quote Bernard Shaw, "Next to torture, art persuades fastest." Art is the best therapy. Men all through the ages have known this. Scientists are admitting this now. Art is the best means of education--the church has always known this; our colleges and civic bodies are learning it. Art is the best means of communication. The church has always known this; our colleges and civic bodies are learning it. Art is the best means of communication. The church has known this too: the State Department is learning it.<sup>1</sup>

Just what is the existing aesthetic in America? How is it shaped, formed, and maintained? Furthermore, what is the relationship of the National Endowment for the Arts in helping to shape and maintain those values? The Endowment has consistently defended itself against those who argue that it is elitist and is basically unconcerned with popular art expressions. Based on certain identifiable realities, the Endowment indeed has established a systematic pattern for staffing of personnel and awarding of grants that tends more to support the charges against the Endowment, than they do to support the replies by the Endowment.

Congresswomen Shirley Chisholm pointed out in a testimony before The House Appropriations Subcommittee, there are programs at the Endowment that Blacks and other minorities receive absolutely no support from for

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<sup>1</sup>Agnes DeMille, Choreographer and former member of The National Council on the Arts. Testimony presented to the Senate Subcommittee on Education, Art and the Humanities, June 26, 1979.

their activities.<sup>2</sup> She also pointed out that the majority of the minority staff members at the Endowment were in the lower level positions (GS-1 to GS-7 clerical positions).

The Endowment has been irresponsible in its obligation to enforce Civil Rights requirements. It has refused to act on recommendations of the Justice Department and its own General Counsel to hire a Compliance Officer to help insure equal employment opportunities for its staff. The allocation of grants is reflected in the staffing pattern. The Endowment grants to Black applicants are awarded primarily from one of the interdisciplinary programs (Expansion Arts), not from one of the eight specific arts disciplines. A point to be added here is that the bulk of the funding to Black institutions and organizations come from the budget that has been set aside under the category of Expansion Arts. However, all of the other institutions and organizations that apply to the Endowment either receive funds also from this particular category, or at least they are eligible to do so. The same is not true with respect to Blacks. There is no evidence to indicate that any Black institutions or organization has consistently benefited from the various programs or disciplines at the Endowment. The established pattern at the Endowment reflects a "system of apartheid," both in staffing and in grant allocation.

In the previous chapter, where the 1978 Challenge Grant Awards were cited, particular attention is to be paid to the fact that in this

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<sup>2</sup>See Minority Grants Report for 1976.

program, millions of dollars are awarded to a few institutions and organizations (basically for symphonies and opera). This evidence tends to support the charges raised by Rep. Yates that the Endowment finances "only established groups."<sup>3</sup> In light of what it alludes to as a "diversity of cultures" in America, what is the rationale to grant these select few institutions and organizations, millions and millions of dollars on the one hand, and other types of institutions and organizations a few pennies or nothing? The Museum of Natural History, Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, and The Philharmonic Symphony Society of New York are all New York City based institutions and organizations that are consistently funded on an annual basis with millions and millions of dollars by the Endowment. Why? In the state of California, the following institutions and organizations fall into this category: The Los Angeles Philharmonic Association, Performing Arts Council of the Music Center of Los Angeles, Inc., The Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, San Francisco Opera Association, San Francisco Symphony Association, Sponsors of the San Francisco Performing Arts Center, Inc., San Francisco Museum of Modern Arts, and San Francisco Ballet Association.

In 1974, The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (Washington, D. C.) received a grant in the amount of \$253,000 from the Endowment. It was in 1977 that certain issues were raised concerning Blacks being excluded by the Kennedy Center. The criticism raised was that although the Center is located in a city that is predominantly Black,

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<sup>3</sup>Grace Gleuck, "Record Budget for the Arts Gain," New York Times 12 May 1977, p. 26-C.



and receives public funds for operation, its program and activities tend to appeal to a particular segment of the Washington, D. C. area. As a result of what were identified as clear cases of nonparticipation and involvement on the part of Blacks in the Center's activities, a special committee was formed to monitor this situation.<sup>4</sup> This particular kind of problem, as it relates directly to the Endowment, reflects the fact that the Endowment has been irresponsible in monitoring the practices of its grantees, although it is required by law to do so.

In addition to these concerns raised about the Endowment, in June of 1978, an article appeared in the Atlanta Constitution entitled, "How the South Gets Gypped." The writer of the article, Helen C. Smith, started by saying: "There is a great big lucious pie, concocted out of taxpayers' green stuff, up in Washington at the National Endowment for the Arts, that is sliced into tempting morsels that feed the spirit through the arts."<sup>5</sup> From this point, she raised the question, "But are those slices divided equitably?" More specifically, "is the south the stepchild who gets an occasional crum instead of the whole feast?"

There were three particular points of interest raised:

- 1) The per capita amount of NEA funds allocated for 1977-78 to the five existing regional arts agencies were:

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<sup>4</sup>Heading the special committee was Dr. Archie L. Buffkins of the University of Maryland, a consultant to the Kennedy Center on minority affairs. Other members of the committee include: Thomas Hoving, former director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Quincy Jones, Billy Taylor, Katherine Dunham, Nancy Wilson and Ellen Steward.

<sup>5</sup>Helen C. Smith, "How the South Gets Gypped," Atlanta Constitution, 1 June 1978, p. 1-B.

- A) Western - \$3.19
  - B) Mid-American - 2.48
  - C) Upper Midwest - 1.78
  - D) New England - .82
  - E) Southeastern - .81
- 2) Staffing for panelists, challenge grant allocations, and percentage of the dollars were disproportionately distributed. The figures read:

<u>Panelists</u>	<u>Challenge Grants</u>	<u>Percent of the Dollars</u>
Northeast - 51%	Northeast - 49%	Northeast - 49%
Other - 30%	Other - 30%	Other - 30%
California - 12%	California - 10%	California - 13%
South - 7%	South - 10%	South - 9%

- 3) The article also pointed out that although the southern region constitutes 20 percent of the population, it only benefits about seven percent worth in resources. A specific example was indicated in quoting Anthony Turney, Executive Director of the Southern Arts Federation, who stated that:

"...looking at the NEA annual report for 1976, it shows that 464 citizens sat on the various advisory panels that make recommendations to the National Council on the Arts. Of those 464 citizens, only 33 came from the South....I cannot help but ponder on the fact that there is a similarity between the percentages of grants, dollars and panelists as they pertain to the South...(and) there is a similar correlation between the large Northeastern and California representation."<sup>6</sup>

What these figures demonstrate is that there is a disproportionate representation on the Endowment's staff as well as allocation in grants.

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

This particular system of unequal distribution is based solely on personal and geographic interests. The West (primarily California) and the Northwest (primarily New York City) tend to be at the top of the Endowment's priorities. Once these two areas are satisfied, the scramble takes place to divide whatever else is left over. This is the case whether the issue is per capita funding, appointment of panelist, number and amount of grants, or percentage of dollars amounts. This situation exists because of the Endowment's allegiance to certain individuals who have close relationships with certain cultural institutions and organizations. What are some of these institutions and organizations?

In Thomas R. Dye's book, Who's Running America?, he focused on the issue of "The Cultural Organizations." He writes that: "The identification of the nation's leading...cultural institutions requires qualitative judgement about the prestige and influence of a variety of organizations."<sup>7</sup> He selected six cultural organizations:

- 1) The Metropolitan Museum of Art;
- 2) The Smithsonian Institution;
- 3) Museum of Modern Art;
- 4) Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts;
- 5) National Gallery of Art; and
- 6) John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

Dye points out that: "It is difficult to measure the power of particular institutions in the world of art, music, and theatre. Certainly there

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<sup>7</sup>Thomas R. Dye, Who's Running America? The Carter Years, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1979), p. 123.

are a number of viable alternatives that might be added to or substituted for our choices."<sup>8</sup>

#### The Metropolitan Museum of Art

This organization in New York City is the largest museum in the United States, with a collection of nearly one-half million objects of art. Decisions of the Metropolitan Museum regarding exhibitions, collections, showings, and art objects have tremendous impact on what is or is not to be considered valued art in America. These decisions are the formal responsibility of the governing board. This board includes names such as: Arthur A. Houghton, President and Chairman of the Board of Corning Glass; C. Douglass Dillion, Former Secretary of Treasury, under Secretary of State, and a Director of Chase Manhattan Bank; and Mrs. McGeorge Bundy, wife of the former presidential assistant for national security affairs under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, and former president of the Ford Foundation.

#### The Smithsonian Institution

The Smithsonian in Washington, supports a wide variety of scientific publications, collections and exhibitions. It also exercised nominal control over the National Gallery of Art, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and the Museum of Natural History, although these component organizations have their own boards of directors. The Smithsonian itself is directed by a board consisting of the Vice-President

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

of the United States, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, three U. S. senators, three U. S. representatives, and six "private citizens."

Its private citizens are:

- 1) Crawford Greenwalt, former chairman of the board of E. I. DuPont De Nemours and a trustee of the DuPont's Christiana Securities Corporation and Morgan Guaranty Trust Company.
- 2) Thomas J. Watson, Jr., Chairman of the Board of IBM.
- 3) William A. M. Burden, a descendant of the Vanderbilts of New York City. Investor in and Director of Allied Chemicals, CBS, Lockheed Aircraft, Manufacturers Hanover Trust, and American Metal Climax. He also served as ambassador to Belgium.
- 4) Carl P. Haskins, President of the Carnegie Foundation and a trustee of the Council on Foreign Relations, RAND Corporation.
- 5) James Edwin Webb, former director of the U. S. Bureau of the Budget and under Secretary of State; former director of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration; a director of Kerr McGee Oil Corporation and Sperry Rand, and trustee of the Committee for Economic Development.

#### The National Gallery of Art

The capital's leading art institution was begun in 1937 when Andrew W. Mellon made the original donation of his art collection together with \$15 million to build the gallery itself. Since then, it has accepted other collections from wealthy philanthropists and exercises considerable influence in the art world. Its directors include:

- 1) Paul Mellon, a son of Andrew Mellon and a director of Mellon National Bank and Trust and the Kellon Foundation;
- 2) John Hay Whitney, centimillionaire, former publisher of the New York Herald Tribune and Ambassador to Great Britain.
- 3) Stoddard M. Stevens, senior partner, Sullivan and Cromwell, top Wall Street law firm.

### The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts

The Kennedy Center in Washington, which was begun in 1964, also has a considerable influence on the arts in America. Its board is largely "political" in origin, including:

- 1) Arhtur Ochs Sulzberger, Publisher and President of the New York Times; and
- 2) Henry S. Morgan, son of J. P. Morgan, who founded U. S. Steel Corporation and International Harvester and became one of the world's wealthiest men in the 1920s through his control of Morgan Guaranty Bank.

### The Museum of Modern Art

This museum in New York City is the leading institution in the nation devoted to collecting and exhibiting contemporary art. It houses not only paintings and sculpture, but also films, prints, and photography. Its loan exhibitions circulate art works throughout the world. The determination of what is to be considered "art" in the world of modern art is extremely subjective. The directors of the Museum of Modern Art, then, have great authority in determining what is or is not to be viewed as art. Its directors include such illustrious names as:

- 1) David Rockefeller, Chairman of the Board of Chase Manhattan;
- 2) John Hay Whitney, centimillionaire, former publisher of the New York Herald Tribune and Ambassador to Great Britain;
- 3) Willian S. Paley, Chairman of the Board of CBS;
- 4) Mrs. C. Douglas Dillon, wife of Douglas Dillon;
- 5) Mrs. Edsel B. Ford, widow of Edsel B. Ford (son of Henry Ford) and mother of Henry Ford, II; and
- 7) Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, III, wife of the oldest of four sons of John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

The Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts

The Lincoln Center in New York City is a major influence in the nation's serious theatre, ballet and music. The Lincoln Center houses the Metropolitan Opera, the New York Philharmonic, and Julliard School of Music. It also supports the Lincoln Repertory Company (theatre), the New York State Theatre (ballet), and the Library-Museum for Performing Arts. These component parts exercise some independence, but the Lincoln Center's board of directors has considerable formal responsibility over all of these activities. The Chairman of the board of Lincoln Center is John D. Rockefeller, III, the oldest of the Rockefeller brothers.

The Metropolitan Opera, which opened in 1883, is the nation's most influential institution in the field of serious operatic music. Decisions about what operas to produce influence greatly what is, or is not, to be considered serious opera in America and indeed the world. Such decisions are the formal responsibility of a board that includes such luminaries as the following:

- 1) Mrs. August Belmont, a daughter of the Saltonstalls of Massachusetts;
- 2) William Rockefeller, a cousin of the Rockefeller brothers and a senior partner of Shearman and Sterling, a top Wall Street law firm;
- 3) Edward M. Kennedy, U. S. Senator from Massachusetts;
- 4) Mrs. J. W. Marriott, wife of the President of Marriott Hotels, himself a heavy financial contributor to political candidates;
- 5) Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, the former Mrs. John F. Kennedy;
- 6) Charles H. Percy, U. S. Senator from Illinois;

- 7) Elliott M. Richardson, former Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, Secretary of Defense, and Attorney General; and
- 8) Arthur H. Schlesinger, Jr., former Special Assistant to President John F. Kennedy, member of the Trilateral Commission.



## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

As demonstrated by the available evidence, including the United States House of Representatives Appropriations Committee's Investigative Report, the Endowment has perpetuated programs and practices that are discriminatory. The Endowment's policies have clearly shown that it is not seriously concerned about its notion of being committed to "cultural pluralism." It continues to lack geographic, racial, as well as broad base representation in its support of the various arts disciplines. The available evidence support the charges that the NEA provides tremendous financial and technical support to a "centralized" cultural power that exist. As a result of their positions of influence with certain political and economic institutions and organizations, a "select" few individuals virtually establish, dictate and control the cultural apparatus in American society, through the National Arts Endowment.

The Endowment is basically concerned with identifying, relating to, and assisting Euro-American culture. Irrespective to the arguments that it offers to the contrary, this is the practicing reality. Although the Endowment has instituted a number of "changes" within the past two years, such as a rotation of personnel policy, compartmentalizing and specializing in particular parts of its program area, it has not addressed itself to any fundamental alteration of its established structure or practices. To reemphasize points that were argued by Endowment

Chairman Biddle, when speaking before the U. S. Senate's Committee on Labor and Human Resources, the effort is not so much to outright deny that certain groups and individuals benefit from the Endowment and others do not in equal proportion. He articulated, in his presentation, more of a "justification" than a denial, when questioned about the charges of "elitism" and "populism" and how the arts were being polarized. Biddle responded: "It seems to me that 'elitism' can indeed mean quality, can indeed mean 'the best'--and 'populism' I would suggest can mean 'access.'"

In Biddle's words, individuals should have access to the best there is in the arts. It so happens that "the best" is determined by some individuals and institutions for other individuals and other institutions. In this particular case, "the best" ends up being culture that is determined by middle to upper income white Euro-Americans. What this actually means is that "the best" is symphony, philharmonic, opera, and chamber type institutions and organizations. As indicated by a study which looked at "Median Income of Audience by Art Form," the median of median incomes for orchestras and opera was \$20,000 to \$21,000, and the range of median income was between \$18,000 and \$28,000. In spite of all that it has done and even that which it is proposing to do, the Endowment's policies do not reflect the cultural diversity that exists in America.

The discrimination case involving the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D. C. is not an isolated case among the Endowment's major grantees. The Endowment's major grantees exemplify

the same type of posture as does the Endowment itself. As indicative of the racial and class nature of the Endowment, in 1975 it awarded \$14,216,346 to cultural institutions and organizations in Greater New York. Black institutions and organizations received only 5.2 percent of the total amount awarded. The 1976 Minority Grants Report further supports the charges that the policies and practices of the Endowment are of a race and class nature. At the 1979 hearings on the arts held in Washington, Congressional Black Caucus member Congresswomen Shirley Chisholm argued that minority applicants receive only five percent of funds allocated by the Endowment.

The Endowment also has now moved to properly ensure that it becomes more responsive to the public which it is designated to serve. Even a recommendation by the Justice Department, and its own legal counsel, that it appoint an Equal Opportunity Employee (EOE) Officer was not acted upon. Instead, the line position was eliminated altogether. The "elevation" of Gordon Braithwaite to the position of Special Assistant for Minority Concerns, even in Braithwaite's own words, has no real effect or impact on the overall program and policy activities of the Endowment. In fact, his role has even been referred to simply as one of a "spectator." As evident by its funding policy, and a specific charge raised by Rep. Chisholm, the Endowment tends to operate with more of an "anti-community" arts posture. In many respects, this has to do with the content and purpose of "community arts,"<sup>1</sup> as opposed to

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<sup>1</sup>"Community arts" in this respect is used as a code meaning black cultural activities, since "other" forms of "community arts" are recognized as legitimate. See "Is There a Future for Black Talent in

"art for art sake" that is perpetuated by mainstream Euro-American cultural institutions and organizations. In Congresswoman Chisholm's words, neighborhood arts are not seen as "legitimate" art.

The posture of the government today has "changed" only in form. During the 1930s in particular, the government was more overt in its censorship toward certain cultural expressions. But today, as the arts become more and more of a recognized tool for communication and cultural identity in America society, the government uses the Endowment as the vehicle by which it dictates cultural policy for the nation. While the Endowment does not enforce Affirmative Action or Title VI Civil Rights Regulations, the government does nothing to make constructive and innovative enforcement of violations by the Endowment. A primary example of this attitude by the government is demonstrated where the Justice Department, instead of enforcing the law, only "recommended" that the Endowment hire an Equal Opportunity Employee Officer.

In a sense, the Endowment's practices of discrimination in hiring and staffing procedures; unequal distribution of grants and technical assistance; and geographic imbalance in all of these matters are ignored by the government. While the Endowment has begun to have some effect on altering the geographic imbalance that existed, the same cannot be said

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the Theatre?" Jet, August 9, 1979, p. 63. In an interview, Broadway (New York) producer Woodie King, Jr. commented about why there is a lack of support for Black cultural activities, especially theatre, from the white community. King pointed out that the theatre is an instrument by which messages can be conveyed. King talked about how many Black plays tend to speak to the "ills of America"; which whites are responsible for. This has a lot to do with how American society views Black cultural activities.

for its race and class posture. As one of its strongest critics in Congress, Congresswoman Chisholm argues that the various changes made by the Endowment would have some impact in enhancing the diversity of the review process. However, she warns that there is a fundamental problem with such an approach: "...it does not go to the core issue: who will be responsible for overseeing access and equity in the Endowment's programs?"<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm, Testimony before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Washington, D. C., May 8, 1979.

APPENDIX A  
TEXT OF CONGRESSWOMAN SHIRLEY CHISHOLM'S TESTIMONY  
BEFORE THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
INTERIOR, MAY 8, 1979

Text of Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm's Testimony before the House  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, May 8, 1979

After a meeting last October with the Arts and Humanities Braintrust, Chairman Biddle agreed to establish an Office for Minority Concerns to enhance opportunities for minority participation at the Endowment. The need for such an office was supported by evidence contained in the 1976 Minority Grants Report. During that year, at least four of the Endowment's twelve programs awarded no money to minorities in three categories of grants: Individual, Organizations, and Project. For example, no minority individual received grants under the Media Arts or Museum Programs. Incredibly, the Fed-state program did not fund a single minority project in 1976. The NEA has never provided the Congressional Black Caucus, or anyone else for that matter, with any extensive records stipulating their current awards to minority groups. The real allocation of awards to minorities is a figure that can only be guessed at.

Unfortunately, Mr. Chairman, examples of these funding equities are only too evident. An example of the lack of minority access to NEA funds can be seen in the small number of awards to historically Black colleges when compared with awards made to all colleges and universities. Out of \$4.1 million available to postsecondary institutions, only four awards totaling \$45,000 were awarded to Black colleges last year. The same access problem can be seen in the equally small number of awards to minority firms. Again, to date there have been only four minority firms who received contracts from the NEA. Last year, eight Black dance companies were denied touring funds by the NEA. Dance companies often rely heavily on touring to bring in additional revenue to maintain their home seasons. Further, the denial of funds to these companies limited their ability to present their particular unique talents to isolated areas of this country which are totally unfamiliar with these artists. In the Challenge Grant Program, of the 309 challenge grantees, only 15 have been minority organizations.

The question then becomes what impact has the Office of Minority Concerns had on these disparaging statistics? While the office's Director Gordan Braithwaite has had several important accomplishments during his short six-month tenure, the office in its present structure, can not possible do the kind of comprehensive work that is needed to influence policy in all areas of the NEA. A change of policy priorities is the key to minority access at the Endowment. One of the major drawbacks to access is the lack of minorities in top level positions at the Endowment. The latest data indicate that of the approximately 80 minorities, 44 (or 55 percent) of them are concentrated in clerical positions from GS-1 to GS-7. The problem here again is priorities. It is difficult to believe that the NEA is committed to increased minority participation when, out of 325 staff positions, only five minorities are at the GS-15 level. In fact, two of these five positions have a direct program authority

but report directly to Chairman Biddle as Special Assistants for Minority Concerns and New Constituencies. Of the 15 senior level positions, with program authority, only two of these are presently minorities. Without program authority, you are outside of the mainstream of Endowment activity. Consequently, it is extremely difficult to have a direct influence on policies related to accessibility. This has unfortunately become the fate of the Office of Minority Concerns.

What is even more critical to affecting change for minorities at the NEA is the total absence of minorities in any policy-making position at the Endowment. For example, the policy-making role of the Office of Minority Concerns could have been elevated if the responsibility for some of the programs that were formally administered by the Deputy Chairman for Intergovernmental Relations had been transferred to that office rather than dispersed between two deputies. This would have allowed the Office of Minority Concerns to at least enter the mainstream of Endowment activity. We should remember that in any game plan, you are likely to score more points as a participant rather than a spectator. The Office of Minority Concerns present spectator role is not conducive to promoting major change in the Endowment's priorities.

These problems and others were fully acknowledged by the Department of Justice when it rejected the NEA's Title VI Compliance Plan in July of last year. The Federal Program Section of the Civil Rights Division found the plan unacceptable because it failed to cite the following specific matters: timetables/internal controls for reviews; allocation staff; guidelines; civil rights training; use of continuing state programs and their obligations (28 C.F.R. Section 42.210); and the existence and impact of delegation agreements....

#### Nondiscrimination by Recipients Receiving Endowment Funds

Over the many months that I have studied the operation of the Endowment, I have identified several compliance problems involving an imbalance in the distribution of federal funds to recipient state art councils as well as individual grantees. For example, allegations have been brought to my attention which raise serious doubt about the ability of the Endowment to ensure that federal statutory prohibitions barring discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex and handicapped are enforced at the state and national levels. For example, charges of discrimination in the allocation of grants awarded by state art councils have resulted in referrals to the Justice Department. Without a systematic approach and administrative remedy available for the speedy resolution of complaints involving discrimination, many more individuals will be forced to experience unnecessary delays in receiving a response to their charges. My investigations leaves little doubt that bias in program and activities funded under the Endowment will persist until the agency has at its disposal a mechanism to ameliorate these problems....



### Title VI Compliance

The legislative mandate of the Endowment's authorizing legislation, which establishes a grant-in-aid program to the states [Section 5 (g)] of the act, requires that funds allocated directly to the states be used for the development of "projects and productions in the arts in such a manner as will furnish adequate programs; facilities and services in the arts to all the people and communities in each of the several states." Many states arts councils have been negligent in monitoring the use of these funds on a local level as well as making them available on an equal basis to residents of that state. Title VI Compliance requirements stipulate that the responsibility for the implementation of its provisions lies with the head of each agency extending federal financial assistance (42 U. S. C. Section 2000-1). Section 42.415 of the Civil Federal Rules require that an agency's compliance plan has or intends to satisfy each specific matter of its overall Title VI responsibility. This is required even if the agency, like the NEA, may not perform certain enforcement activities due to a delegation agreement. Further, where an agency provides assistance to continuing state programs; for example, state arts councils, a procedure or system designed to ensure that such recipients have established a Title VI Program for itself and its sub-recipients is mandated. Fed-state and others within the Endowment will continue or increase their contributions to local and state arts groups. Consequently, it is imperative that NEA continue to monitor state plans for equitable access.

### General Policy Issues

Several policy issues have come to my attention in reviewing NEA's access problems. These issues must be addressed if the Endowment is to increase accessibility beyond the "closed circle" as discussed in your staff investigation report. Program directors must actively encourage panels to view applicants as serious candidates for funding under a given program. Currently, Expansion Arts, Folk Arts and Special Projects programs are looked to as the programs for minorities and other non-traditional arts groups. While Expansion Arts has assisted many community-based art groups and new art programs, it should not be seen as the "dumping ground" for any proposal with a minority component. The same principle would apply to folk arts. Rural artists have benefited tremendously from this program through workshops and festivals funded by the NEA. But these artists should not be confined exclusively to Folk Arts as their only source of Endowment monies. They should be able, for example, to apply to Visual Arts, if their talent is in the visual arts, with the same consideration they would have received as a Folk Arts' applicant.

### Recommendations

I believe that the Office of Minority Concerns can never be a catalyst for real change as it is presently structured. A Special Assistant for Minority Concerns, with a secretary and contractual consultant, is hardly enough to influence access policy for 12 different programs. This position should be elevated to a deputy chair for access and equity. The person would then have specific responsibility for generating policy to enhance the underrepresentation of such groups as minorities, rural and community artists. The vacuum of a specific policy person in this area contributes to the low priority this issue has received to date. I recognize that this new position would require the allocation of an additional GS-16 position to the agency. The rationale was given to explain the present structure of the Office of Minority Concerns. It is obvious that the Office of Minority Concerns can not really generate any policy changes in the NEA's administrative apparatus. It is evident to me that without this position not very much will change at the Endowment. I am aware of the investigative report of this committee which recommends a reorganization of the NEA's panel structure. Although I believe that this would enhance the diversity of the review process, I feel it does not go to the core issue: who will be responsible for overseeing access and equity in the Endowment's program? Certainly, twelve different programs could not be expected to handle that responsibility. It is for this reason that I strongly support the creation of a third Deputy Chairman. This Deputy Chair position is the only way that access for minorities and others can be assured. Further, I feel that language should be attached to the FY '80 appropriation for the NEA which will require that the Endowment develop a plan for increasing access for underrepresented groups. This will force the Endowment to reassess its priorities and develop some strategies for increasing opportunities for all of America's artists.

APPENDIX B  
GROWTH IN SELECTED CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS  
ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING 1965-1978

TABLE 3  
GROWTH IN SELECTED CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS  
ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING\*  
1965 - 1978

<u>Types of Institutions</u>	<u>1965</u>	<u>1978</u>
Professional Symphony Orchestra	58	144
Professional Opera Companies	27	65
Large Professional Theaters	12	70
Small Professional Theaters	10	200
Professional Dance Companies	37	200
Museums (Art, Science and History)	1,700	1,800
Media Arts Centers	1	15
Artists Spaces	0	200
State Arts Agencies (including territories and District of Columbia)	7	56

\*Estimated

APPENDIX C  
NASAA LETTER

September 20, 1977

The Honorable Sidney Yates  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on the Interior  
Committee on Appropriations  
House of Representatives  
Room B-308  
Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D. C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

At its Annual Meeting held in Salt Lake City, Utah, September 16-18, 1977, the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies considered the matter of funding for "small groups and struggling artists." Representatives of the National Endowment for the Arts presented their proposed guidelines for distribution of \$3.6 million in grants to the above-named applicants. I have been instructed by unanimous resolution to convey the following points to you on behalf of the Assembly.

First, it is of utmost importance to declare that state arts agencies as a group and individually share the concerns for assisting small groups and struggling artists. Most, if not all of them, now serve these applicants with a wide variety of grants and services, using state-appropriated funds and Federal funds received from the National Endowment for the Arts. The state arts agencies have communication lines open to these applicants, have mechanisms in place to serve them and, perhaps most important, have the perspective to make informed and fair decisions about them by virtue of experience and proximity.

There is no question in our minds that more funds are needed to serve these applicants, among others. As you have heard in testimony and other contacts from state arts agency leaders, we encourage and applaud your continued efforts to raise the Federal appropriations for the arts. Having discussed the Endowment's efforts to design a program based on Congress's stated desire to see this constituency better served, we respectfully submit that we have strong apprehensions that those efforts will fail to achieve the intended goal. For this reason, we are recommending that the Endowment immediately suspend its plans until more effective cooperative explorations and planning can be completed to meet this mutually-held goal.

Some would characterized this position as one motivated by a desire for greater power for the state arts agencies. We urge you to reject such a notion and accept our recommendation on its merits, understanding that it come from a deep concern for serving the clientele in the most effective way. We would also like to note that we realize and accept the fact

that our recommendation would at least temporarily suspend the distribution of the mandated 20% of the \$3.6 million to the states and/or regions.

The substance of our apprehension is that the current plan proposed by the Endowment would not meet the stated goal, and quite possibly, would create unmet expectations, disappointment, frustration and hostility among the very clients it is aimed to serve. The previously ineligible applicants who might benefit from these proposed programs are large in number and eager for new funding sources, as are all the arts. The creation of new mechanisms at the Endowment and the augmentation of existing ones will have profound implications at the Endowment itself, which already has over 150 categorical programs, an astounding number for so small an agency. We have conflicting feelings--a sincere recognition of a desire to meet the needs of the proposed beneficiaries contrasted to a real fear that the Endowment will not be able to sustain the effects of its proposed actions with a relatively modest amount of funds.

For a speedy resolution and implementation of the program, we would propose to immediately reopen the planning, this time with meaningful participation by representatives of the intended clientele, state arts agencies, community arts agencies, the national arts service organizations and the Endowment. This planning should examine every possible option to meet the proposed goal, with explanations of the financial, administrative and policy implications of each option. We would propose that you and your colleagues and/or staff either be direct participants in these explorations or that you be kept apprised of their progress and receive a report on the results. In this way, a full understanding of the subject matter would be achieved, to the satisfaction of all affected interests.

This subject, to which you gave constructive special recognition in your latest deliberations, is too consequential to be addressed in a hasty and superficial manner. We trust that you will agree that to proceed as we have recommended will greatly increase the possibility that the job will be done right.

I, and any number of my colleagues, would be happy to meet with you at your convenience to discuss this in greater detail.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Stephen Sell  
Chairman  
National Assembly of State Arts Agencies

APPENDIX D  
MEDIAN INCOME OF AUDIENCE BY ART FORM



TABLE 4  
MEDIAN INCOME OF AUDIENCE BY ART FORM

Art Form	Median of Median Incomes <sup>1</sup>	Range of Median Incomes	Total Number of Studies
All Museums	\$17,158	\$13,394 - \$30,618	18
Art Museums	18,148	14,016 - 30,618	10
History Museums	16,757	13,394 - 29,055	3
Science Museums	17,269	14,765 - 20,851	5
All Performing Arts	18,903	9,466 - 28,027	70
Ballet and Dance	20,082	16,452 - 22,404	10
Theater			
Excluding Outdoor Drama	19,342	9,469 - 25,784	27
Including Outdoor Drama	16,819	9,466 - 25,784	45
Orchestra	20,825	18,221 - 28,027	11
Opera	21,024	19,017 - 27,245	5

<sup>1</sup>In constant mid-1976 dollars.

SOURCES: Research Division Report #9, National Endowment for the Arts, Audience Studies of the Performing Arts and Museums: A Critical Review, November 1978, Table 6, p. 30. A study by Paul Dimaggio, Michael Useem and Paula Brown, Center for the Study of Public Policy, November 1977.

On the subject of "Race and Ethnicity," the report concluded that: "The relative paucity of Blacks and other racial and ethnic minorities in arts audiences has commented on frequently and, indeed, has been a matter of some concern to the arts community." In 1972, the American Association of Museums called attention to the problem of making museums relevant and hospitable to intercity and minority people, noting that the movement of the middle class to the suburbs and of Blacks, Mexican-Americans and Puerto Ricans to the core city "have left the museum, an urban institution, to some extent a beached whale...." (see American Association of Museums, 1972), p. 6.

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